

INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL PREHISTORY

It was expected that sites from all periods of Delaware prehistory could be found in the floodplain, and that the slopes bordering the floodplain were too steep to provide suitable places for habitation sites. No intact prehistoric features and only a handful of scattered flakes and fire-cracked rocks were found during the Route 41 survey. All of the scanty lithic debris was confined to the plowzone at the Hollingsworth and Conner sites on the Red Clay Creek floodplain. Because the total area of the floodplain which was sampled during the testing was relatively small, the negative evidence does not mean that no sites exist in the floodplain. The presence of debitage among the Route 41 artifacts, plus the informant evidence of Mr. Conner's that bifaces were found several decades ago in the former plowed field south of his house, suggests that a prehistoric occupation existed somewhere nearby. It should also be noted that the low expectation for sites on the slopes bordering the creek floodplain was not contradicted by the survey results, but once again, the sampled area was small. In general, the dearth of artifacts and features precludes the making of any statements pertaining to the existing models (Custer and Wallace 1982, Custer 1984) about the nature of the prehistoric adaptation in this section of the Red Clay Creek Valley.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL HISTORY

Almost all of the historic cultural resources discussed in this report postdate the Civil War. The coming of the

Wilmington and Western Railroad in 1872 brought great changes to this section of the Newport-Gap Pike, as in other areas (Clayton 1948; Gibb 1965; Hunter et al. 1984). The documentary evidence for the residential properties in segments 3 and 4 (Hollingsworth, Conner, and Bower) indicates that all were developed on or soon after 1872. The railroad depot created a transportation nexus at the intersection with Route 41, increased values of the surrounding real estate for both residential and commercial uses, and served to trigger the transformation of the area from a largely rural landscape to one of residential lots. It also encouraged some commercial development, for the tax records indicate that Andrew J. Williams had a store on his property at one point (also corroborated by Mr. Bower, who stated that a store once existed in one of the front rooms of his house) and a mill on the property at another time. The residents of these lots were tradesmen who probably supplemented their income with one to two acre cultivated plots at the rear of the property. The railroad also served to promote the success of the nearby Green Bank mill, Brandywine Springs Amusement Park, and the Cedars subdivision.

In conclusion, the culture history of the Route 41 project area appears to be closely tied to the development of the area after the establishment of the railroad depot in 1872. It is unfortunate, however, that the depot foundation and its surrounding grounds are not in a better state of preservation. It would be valuable to be able to supplement the historic documentation of the station with archaeological evidence pertaining to the more specific behavior of the passengers who

used the station throughout its approximately 60 year lifespan. Prior to the advent of modern air and auto travel, passenger train stations served as one of the hubs of communication and social interaction for every community in which they existed.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONCLUSIONS

No significant archaeological resources were encountered in the ROW and no further archaeological research is recommended for the project area.